Survey of Alaska's Beaches

NOAA and DEC have several projects underway to better identify and assess the impacts of tsunami marine debris in Alaska, these include:

NOAA Vessel Survey:

- NOAA has conducted marine debris surveys along Alaska's coast every 5-10 years since the 1970's, but they began a routine survey targeted at evaluating the impact of tsunami debris in June 2012.
- NOAA scientists left Ketchikan aboard a charter vessel to begin a 10 day cruise along Alaska's coastline from Dixon Entrance to Cape Spencer.
- NOAA reportedly recorded debris at 36 sites on 9 different islands, but could not confirm whether the debris was tsunami related.
- They plan to continue surveying throughout the summer, going north and west up Alaska's coastline.
- NOAA will continue to compare the marine debris found with past surveys to refine predictions about the long term impacts of tsunami debris along the coast.

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DEC Aerial Survey:

- DEC contracted with Airborne Technologies, Inc. (ATI) to do a systematic and complete aerial survey for Japanese tsunami debris along the Alaskan coastline.
- ATI flies a C-185 aircraft at an altitude of 500-1000 feet mounted with high definition video cameras and high resolution still cameras.
- Beginning in July 2012, ATI took aerial images of the shoreline to determine the impact of tsunami debris along the Alaskan coastline. The survey included coverage from Cape Muzon, the southern boundary point between Alaska and Canada, to Cape Spencer, and along the exposed beach area northward to Cape Suckling. From there, ATI has surveyed areas of Kayak Island, Hinchinbrook Island, Montague Island and exposed capes and points to Gore Point.
- The survey continued southwest to the Barren Islands, exposed points of Afognak and Kodiak Islands, Cape Douglas and southward along the Alaska Peninsula to Cold Bay.